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To All The Moms

Dear Readers,

As we embrace Mother's Day this month, let's celebrate the remarkable strength, boundless love, and unwavering support of all the mothers around us. Whether it's through a comforting embrace, words of wisdom, or acts of kindness, mothers enrich our lives in countless ways. Let's take this opportunity to express our deep gratitude and shower them with the love and appreciation they truly deserve.

Here at STROLL, we recognize and appreciate the invaluable contribution of our community moms. Your support and cheerleading as you share stories and photos help us all connect and thrive. Thank you for being the heart and soul of what we do.

Happy Mother's Day to all the incredible moms!

Warmly,

Stacy

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FINANCIAL ANXIETY IS THE BIGGEST SLEEP THIEF

Tips to navigate financial uncertainty for a more secure and restful future

BY SCOTT KAHAN, CFP®, CHAPPAQUA RESIDENT

In an era of unprecedented change and economic volatility, the sleepless nights associated with financial concerns are becoming all too familiar. Despite an overall confidence in their financial well-being, a significant number of Americans, particularly from the younger generations, are grappling with anxiety about money that permeates various aspects of their lives.

FINANCIAL CONFIDENCE VS. LIFE DOMAINS

A recent survey reveals that while 57% of Americans express confidence in the state of their finances, this sentiment pales in comparison to their confidence in other areas of life. A staggering 79% feel strongly about their friendships, 75% about their mental health, 74% about their physical health, and 69% about their job stability. This stark contrast highlights the unique challenges that financial anxiety poses, especially for younger generations.

GENERATIONAL DIVIDE IN FINANCIAL ANXIETY

For Gen Zers and Millennials, the weight of financial uncertainty is particularly burdensome. When asked about the consequences of financial uncertainty at least once a month, 54% of millennials and 47% of Gen Z respondents admitted to feeling depressed. In stark contrast, only 20% of Baby Boomers reported a similar emotional toll. The sleep disruptions caused by financial stress are palpable, with 44% of Gen Zers and 53% of millennials reporting regular sleep disturbances, contrasting with the 37% average across all age groups.

IMPACT ON RELATIONSHIPS AND HEALTH

The ripple effect of financial anxiety extends beyond personal well-being to relationships and physical health. A concerning 42% of Gen Zers and 45% of millennials noted that financial issues have created problems in their relationships with friends and family.

Moreover, over a third of respondents from both generations reported that money problems have made them “physically ill” at least once a month.

NAVIGATING THE STORM: COPING STRATEGIES

Financial Literacy: Invest time in improving financial literacy. Understanding budgeting, investing, and debt management can empower individuals to take control of their financial futures.

Open Communication: Establish open communication about money within relationships. Discussing financial goals, concerns, and strategies can help alleviate tension and foster mutual understanding.

Mental Health Support: Prioritize mental health by seeking support when needed. Therapy, counseling, or support groups can provide valuable tools to cope with the emotional toll of financial anxiety.

Emergency Fund: Build and maintain an emergency fund. Having a financial safety net can offer peace of mind during uncertain times and act as a buffer against unexpected expenses.

PLANNING MATTERS

The pervasive impact of financial anxiety on sleep, relationships, and overall well-being is a pressing concern. Acknowledging these challenges is the first step towards finding effective coping strategies.

Finances can be complicated. A qualified professional can help you to identify your goals and strategies to reach these goals. Reach out to a fee only Certified Financial Planner® professional for help and guidance along the way.

At FAM, our goal is to help you reach your goals. Hopefully, working with us will lead to a better night's sleep!



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Chappaqua Farmers Market

BY PASCALE LE DRAOULEC, CFM MARKET DIRECTOR

Last year, we moved the farmer’s market back to the picturesque train station “circle” and never looked back. Talk about a lovely, shady place to “stroll” on a Saturday morning.

This season, we’ve invited a bevy of exceptional *new* vendors to join us in our happy place.

But first, we are thrilled about the return of a former vendor, **Letterbox Farm Collective**. This farm has consistently raised the bar in the Hudson Valley farming community. CFM habitués will remember Nichki Carangelo, livestock manager at Letterbox, and her appealing display of always fresh chicken and pastured pork, too. And those eggs!

The Hudson, N.Y., farm has expanded in recent years, adding a certified kitchen so that they now make hand-scratch quiches (caramelized onion and goat cheese), slow-

simmered bone broths, and plump dumplings using farm ingredients. They also grow edible flowers (nasturtiums on a market salad are *everything*), culinary herbs like French tarragon and lovage, and herbs for teas like lemon verbena. They will be bringing smoked trout each week from their neighbors at **Hudson Valley Fishery**, just the thing to layer on to a **DoughCo** “everything” bagel. This year, DoughCo’s Josh Small is bringing **Jones Family Farm** spreadable goat cheese to slather onto your Saturday morning bagel, too.

Shoppers got a teasing taste of creamy, decadent **White Moustache Yogurt** last November. They will be here twice a month.

You know what goes great with their plain Persian yogurt? Granola! This season, we bring you two very different granola vendors.



“It’s *so* nutty that we like to think that if trail mix and granola had a baby, it would be *our* granola.”



The Hampton Grocer, based in Montauk, NY, specializes in small-batch granola, in flavors like cinnamon and dried cherry, or lemon poppy and blueberry. Sweetened with local honey or maple syrup, it’s packed with nuts and seeds. Says founder Sam Sherman: “It’s *so* nutty that we like to think that if trail mix and granola had a baby, it would be *our* granola.”

Wildcraft Baking Co. specializes in gluten-free “vegetal” granola. Think parsnip and oat, beet and buckwheat, or cocoa chickpea. Brittany Velucci took a market break to open a gluten-free café in Irvington and have a baby.

Also, in the crispy department, please welcome **Norwegian Baked Knekkebrød** and their highly addictive traditional crispbreads, delicious with lox, any **Second Mouse** cheese, or straight out of the bag!

We are so pleased to welcome **Mead Orchards**, of Tivoli, N.Y., into our circle, literally and figuratively. This is one of the oldest and most established orchards in the Hudson River Valley region, dating back to 1916. Back then, farmer Gordon Mead would ship barrels of his crisp apples to NYC by boat down the mighty Hudson. Over time and three generations (all Mead men attended Cornell’s School of Agriculture), the orchard planted pears, peaches, plums, apricots, nectarines, cherries, and berries (some are no spray!). They also grow pumpkins, sweet corn, squash, tomatoes, and peppers, and all will be available at the CFM.



A few years ago, when Chuck Mead (Gordon’s grandson) was ready to retire without an heir-apparent, he sold the orchard to some of his favorite shoppers, a Pleasantville family raised on Mead apples and keen on preserving this beautiful farm.

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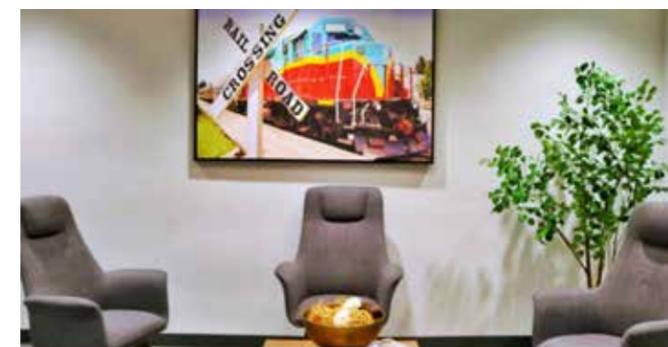


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What I Look For IN A NANNY

BY KEREN LAI, OWNER, CARNATION HOME CARE, LLC

IN HONOR OF MOTHER'S DAY, we met with Keren Lai from Carnation Home Care, LLC, to explore her expert strategies for helping you choose the perfect nanny for your family. It's crucial to find the right nanny, yet it can be quite challenging. Keren shares valuable insights into the key qualities she looks for when interviewing prospective nannies.

Nurturing You want your nanny to have a caring and loving way about them. Nurturing care is going to meet all of the child's social and emotional needs, and it will help them to grow and thrive in a secure environment.



Proactive It's really nice to partner with a nanny who is proactive in their approach to care. This includes being a proactive communicator with a family, being a proactive planner for weekly activities, or even being proactive with household chores.

Good Communication Being a good communicator is incredibly important in the nanny-family working relationship. Good communication at the start of the relationship means that everybody has clear expectations about the position, the style of nanny care that the parents are seeking, and also the ability to give and receive feedback. If one party doesn't feel like safely communicating their feelings or asking questions, that is not going to lead to a strong working relationship. To maintain productive

communication, it is advised to have frequent check-ins as a way to quickly and easily connect about any issues that may arise.

Positivity Positivity is another helpful trait because it can really impact the whole dynamic in a child's day. Helping a child to see the bright side of things is so important because children have big feelings about just about everything.

HOW DO YOU FIND THESE CHARACTERISTICS IN A NANNY?

These characteristics are tricky to evaluate since they are not listed on a resume. It is important to know how to evaluate whether or not a nanny candidate has these traits.

Have a detailed job description. Make sure to talk about your family and also tell about what an ideal nanny would mean for your family. Ideally, there is some common ground (maybe a shared interest) that can facilitate a great connection and a deeper conversation during an interview.

Evaluate every interaction with the nanny candidate. Responsiveness to emails or text messages when setting up an interview can really help to demonstrate reliability and proactivity. A nanny asking if they should remove their shoes upon entering your home or texting if they've maybe arrived a few minutes early for the interview demonstrates attention to detail.

Include some non-childcare questions in the interview. Think about what questions might help you to evaluate qualities or values that are not listed on that resume. This could be a question about where they see themselves in five years, what is a goal they are currently working to accomplish, or what was the last good book they read.

I also recommend asking a nanny about their care philosophy. It's extremely important that you are satisfied with this answer during an interview. This is going to be the foundation of the nanny care that they deliver, so you want to make sure that you like what they have to say about this. A nanny's care philosophy could include some official care philosophies, such as positive discipline or the Montessori approach. This could also be examples of how a nanny approaches certain situations or the types of activities they enjoy doing with children of different ages and stages. Call Keren for more helpful hints and to schedule an appointment to learn more.

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Hip-Kid in Chappaqua is the ultimate destination for trendy tots and fashion-forward parents. This vibrant boutique offers a carefully curated selection of children's clothing, accessories, and toys that blend style with functionality. From adorable onesies to chic outfits for all occasions, Hip-Kid caters to the modern kid with an eye for design. With its friendly atmosphere and commitment to quality, Hip-Kid has become a beloved staple in the Chappaqua community, inspiring families to embrace their unique sense of style from an early age. **77 S. Greeley, Chappaqua. hip-kid.com**



Owner, Vicki Lange Bergstrom

FOOD

Nestled in the heart of Chappaqua, **Lange's Little Store and Deli** is more than just a convenience stop – it's a beloved community hub bursting with flavor and character. For years, we've been serving up smiles and delicious fare to locals and visitors alike. From artisanal sandwiches made with premium ingredients to freshly brewed coffee that fuels your day, each item on our menu is crafted with passion and care. As a cornerstone of the Chappaqua community, we're proud to support local initiatives that enrich our town. Our heartfelt thanks go out to our loyal patrons whose continued support makes it all possible. **382 King Street, Chappaqua.**



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MAY

National Water Safety Awareness Month



**MEET KELLY BLACKER,
CERTIFIED WATER SAFETY INSTRUCTOR (WSI)
AND SWIM COACH**



Kelly and Cameron Rutherford

CAN YOU FEEL IT?

The growing excitement as summer draws near, promising endless days of blue skies and sunshine with trips to the beach or local pool club. May also marks National Water Safety Awareness Month, a timely reminder of the importance of enjoying water activities responsibly.

Stroll connected with Kelly Blacker, a certified water safety instructor (WSI) and Head Swim Coach at Willowbrook Swim & Tennis Club in Mount Kisco, to ensure a safe and enjoyable season for you and your loved ones. With several other accreditations under her belt with the American Swim Coaches Association and USA Swimming, Kelly's career spans twenty-five years of coaching experience working for Westchester favorites, Boys and Girls Club Marlins swim team and Saw Mill Club Storm Aquatics in Mount Kisco, where she currently works year-round. A well-respected and beloved figure in the community, when she's not coaching, she focuses on teaching children, particularly the little ones, how to swim.

Tell us a little about yourself. What was your motivation behind becoming a swim instructor?

I grew up in Illinois, and my family belonged to a Pool and Tennis Club similar to Willowbrook. My siblings and I were there every day in the summer. I have such fond memories of hanging out with my family at the Club, as well as working there teaching swimming and lifeguarding, starting at 15. I learned to swim and to teach swimming at the YMCA where I grew up. The first time I got certified as a Water Safety

Instructor was during my first year at the University of Illinois. I would later get re-certified in 1998 when I made a career change and became a full-time college Professor, which meant my summers were open. I could now get back to teaching swimming, which I had always had a passion for. This year marks my thirtieth year at Willowbrook. The Club holds a special place in my heart as my three children were all members of the Swim and Dive team, too. I am excited for the summer season!

Was there a turning point in your life that made you devote it to water safety and swimming?

When I was in grade school, I had a friend who lost her younger sister to a drowning accident in their family's backyard pool. I was very affected by this and have been driven to try to have an impact to reduce the high rate of drownings.



Cameron Rutherford

Please describe your style of coaching. Approachable, encouraging, attention to detail. I always say 'Stroke before Speed'. You have to start slow and learn the technique first.

What core values guide your coaching?

Confidence building. Making sure that every child, despite their level, feels good about themselves through swimming. It is such a great sport, and I see what it did for my children and the children I coach, and I want to share that with everyone!

What is the most rewarding part about being a swim instructor?

Watching the children progress, reach their goals, and feel accomplished. From the child who was very fearful of the water and finally puts their face in and starts to swim on their own, to another child learning all the strokes and being able to join a swim team, to swimmers competing at a high level and achieving their best time. It is so exciting and fulfilling that I continue to want to do this.

What factors do you consider when preparing for swim classes?

Safety is always part of the plan, no matter the level I am teaching. It is important to always appropriately assess the level of ability that a student is at and it also should always be fun. I get to know my students and their other interests, such as dance or other sports, and I ask about their other activities. I genuinely love to talk to kids and listen to them. I have often been called the "swim whisperer".



Xander Sohng



Oliver Engel, Luca Vozza, Eric Engel, Kelly, Connor McHugh, Miles Molloy, Elliott Spillman, Margaret Spillman

stroke mechanic. Then, you can put the stroke back together. In every practice, much of the focus is on technique and breaking the stroke and the kick down.

How do you track a student's progress?

I keep notes on established goals, progress made, and next steps for every student.

How do you identify a student's experience level?

Identifying specific swim skills achieved. I use Red Cross swim skill level assessments to help with this process. I also lean in on my experience. I have been teaching swimming for over 30 years and have been so lucky to have taught and coached so many children.

How would you handle a child who is experiencing a lack of progress?

Every child will progress. Sometimes, it just takes more time. Encouragement and patience are important. It is also important to take a step back and reassess what has worked and not worked, thinking of new methods and ways of explaining skills that may connect with a particular child.

How do you incorporate teaching into your swim lessons?

Teaching is a progression. Breaking things into meaningful steps works best when teaching anything.

Located at 586 Millwood Road in Mount Kisco, NY, Willowbrook Swim & Tennis Club is Northern Westchester's premier swim and dive club, an undefeated Division 1 swim and dive team for 20 seasons. The Club is open for tennis from May to October and swimming from Memorial Day to Labor Day. All lifeguards are Red Cross certified, and the Club boasts one large heated pool with lap lanes and diving boards and a children's pool for tots and toddlers. Private and group swim lessons are available.

Willowbrook Swim & Tennis has seven outdoor Har-Tru courts available for private lessons, league, clinics, and match play, and participates in USTA Tennis Leagues and MITL tennis leagues. Tennis is offered for adults and children at all skill and ability levels.

To learn more about the Club's facilities and to schedule a tour, please contact Kelly Blacker at (914) 772-6518 / via email at willowbrookswimtennis@gmail.com.



Kelly teaching swimming technique



Maddie Miller, Alice van Wijnen, Luke McHugh, Kelly

What would you do if one of your students was afraid of water?

You have to take it slow. Help them build confidence in the water. If you do this, they will want to progress and try new things. Patience is super important. Reassuring the child and building trust by singing songs and playing games that teach water skills are all important tactics.

How can you ensure the safety of students within the context of the swimming pool?

Safety skills are built into every lesson. For new swimmers, I always include learning skills for a child to get to the side of the pool or a safe space, how to climb out of a pool, and how to roll onto their back, just to mention a few. I also inform the parent of words and phrases to use when they swim with their child to reinforce what I am teaching in the lesson.

What would you do if you saw a child in the pool without an adult?

When instructing lessons, I always remind children never to swim alone, no matter their level. In overseeing the operations of a pool, I always ensure that no child is unattended around the water.

Have you ever made a mistake as a swim instructor? If so, how did you navigate this?

Although I am very experienced at assessing a child's level, occasionally, I may be a little off. Once I start the lesson, I make adjustments. I think it is really important to be flexible and adapt to the situation. As I have experience teaching at all levels, this is very helpful.

How do you assist experienced swimmers to improve their skills?

Breaking down strokes into parts. Drills are used to slow the stroke down and focus on one part of the



Maddie Miller, Rafe Coffino, Alice van Wijnen, Kelly Blacker, Connor McHugh, Haley Penn, Ella Sohng

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Meet Chappaqua Resident Claudia Mulas

Architect, LEED accredited professional in building and construction



Throughout the whirlwind of raising my two daughters, I couldn't shake the itch to get back to my profession. Don't get me wrong, being a mom and getting involved in our community was fulfilling, but as soon as my older daughter left for college, I dove back into the workforce full-time. After a couple of years, I realized I was meant to chart my own course.

Working with clients to bring their visions to life is seriously rewarding, especially when everything falls into place during construction. My focus? Sustainability all the way. Growing up in Europe, I learned the ropes of eco-living early on. From Poland to France, I soaked up the ethos of reducing, reusing, and recycling. So, it was clear to keep that green mindset when I became an architect.

However, my path to becoming an architect was anything but straightforward. I explored various creative avenues, from dabbling in set design to immersing myself in theater studies and even honing my painting skills in Paris. Ultimately, it was my time in New York City that truly solidified my passion. Combining my artistic background with architectural principles, I now specialize in designing spaces that are both aesthetically pleasing and environmentally sustainable.

I began my artistic journey at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris, where I focused on painting and drawing. Simultaneously, I pursued a Master's Degree in theater studies at the Nouvelle Sorbonne-Censier. After gaining experience as a set designer for French television and feeling drawn to the vibrant energy of New York City, I decided to pursue architecture at Cooper Union.

I earned my Master of Architecture from NJIT and am now a registered architect in New York, Connecticut, and New Jersey. Additionally, I am accredited as a LEED AP BD+C

architect, emphasizing my commitment to environmentally conscious design practices.

So yes, I've always had a knack for mixing creativity with practicality. And seeing a project come to life from a mere idea? That's pure magic.

Aside from designing, I serve on the Architectural Review Board of New Castle, helping shape our community's architectural landscape. And when I'm not knee-deep in blueprints, you can find me running through the Rockefeller Preserve or hitting the slopes for some skiing.

As for advice to the folks in Chappaqua? Don't wait too long to spruce up your space. Life's too short to live in a place that doesn't feel like home.

Claudia Mulas, AIA LEED AP Bd+C
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Greeley's Swim/Dive and Indoor Track Standouts

BY NATALIA BAAGE, SOUTHERN WESTCHESTER BOCES/CHAPPAQUA SCHOOL DISTRICT

PHOTOS BY CHRISTINA SCHOONMAKER



Rylan Toner

HOLY HARDWARE! In individual sports, winning medals is called “collecting hardware.” In early March, Greeley student-athletes on the swim/dive and indoor track teams earned a record haul of seven state titles as they competed at their respective New York State Championships.

GREELEY'S SWIM/DIVE TEAM

The boys' swim team collected so much hardware that coaches Meg Kaplan and Jeanne Kellachan needed a hand truck to get the box out of the building! Racing at Ithaca College on March 1 and 2, the boys medaled in 11 of the 12 events they competed in. They impressively took home four state championship titles, set a new meet record in the 200 Medley Relay and broke their own 400 Freestyle Relay record by two seconds while setting a new state, meet and federation record. Horace Greeley was the highest-scoring school at the Swim/Dive State Championships.

Greeley's Swim/Dive athletes are: Jonas Balcetis (27th place in Diving), Jack Cornish (State Champion in the 500 Freestyle, 12th place in the 200 Freestyle), Eric Engel (State Champion in the 400 Freestyle Relay, 8th place in the 200 Freestyle Relay, 9th place in the 100 Freestyle, 9th place in the 200 Freestyle), Oliver Engel (State Champion in the 400 Freestyle Relay, State Champion in the 200 Medley Relay, 3rd place in the 100 Backstroke, 6th place in the 200 IM), LJ Gulotta (State Champion in the 200 Medley Relay, 8th place in the 200 Freestyle Relay), Jayden Holmes (8th place in the 200 Freestyle Relay), Adam Kamal (8th place in the 200 Freestyle Relay), Connor McHugh (State Champion in the 400 Freestyle Relay, State Champion in the 200 Medley Relay, 3rd place in the 100 Fly, 7th place in the 50 Freestyle) and Erik Nadecki (State Champion in the 400 Freestyle Relay, State Champion in the 200 Medley Relay, State Champion in the 200 Individual Medley, 2nd place in the 100 Breaststroke).

GREELEY'S INDOOR TRACK TEAM

Out of the pool and onto the track, the boys' indoor track team was not outdueled! They brought home a slew of accolades from Staten Island's Ocean Breeze Athletic Complex on March 2 - and coaches Billy Rose and Steve McKenney could be heard applauding from there. The team medaled in four of the six events they competed in, winning two state championship titles and two bronze medals; earning a few personal records, including one by the fastest freshman in New York State; and a phenomenal come-from-behind photo-finish victory in the championship's final event.

Greeley's Indoor Track athletes are: Seamus Finn (State Champion in the 4x200 Relay, 3rd place in the 300 Meters), Ben Ho (State Champion in the 4x200 Relay), Kyle McKenney (State Champion in the 4x200 Relay), Ryan Sykes (10th place in the 3,200 Meters), Rylan Toner (22nd place in Pole Vault), Will Weis (State Champion in the 4x200 Relay), Niko Wright (State Champion in the 4x200 Relay, State Champion in the 55 Meters) and Daniel Ye (3rd place in Weight Throw).

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR STATE ATHLETES

“We are incredibly proud of their perseverance and ability to peak and perform at their best on the biggest stages,” said Chappaqua Schools Athletic Director Jamie Block. “Their incredible efforts at the State Championships - and throughout the season - were inspiring. Thank you to everyone who cheered for our athletes all season long. We are grateful for the support and appreciation of everyone's encouragement.”

The two teams' successes at States is the outstanding culmination of a stellar Winter 2023-24 season. The Swim/Dive team has now won the League, Conference, Section and State championships for three years in a row, while the Indoor Track team has won the League, County and Section championships three years in a row.

Six 12th-grade student-athletes from these remarkable teams shared their insight on the Winter 2023-24 season. They are swimmers Eric Engel, Oliver Engel and Jack Cornish, and runners Kyle McKenney, Niko Wright and Seamus Finn.

Q: How did competing at the States Championships with your team this year feel?

Eric Engel: It felt great. The energy during the meet was amazing. Going into it, I knew we had a target on our backs because we were the two-time defending champions. That really motivated us to swim fast because we wanted to three-peat.

Kyle McKenney: Competing at States this year with my team was exciting. I am so proud of everyone who put the time and effort into their respective events and was rewarded with the chance to compete at the State level. Also, most of us have been friends since middle school and to win the highest title together made it even better.

Jack Cornish: It was really fun. The team always brings a ton of energy to meets and it was very exciting to compete with the team and race with each other.

Q: How did you mentally prepare your focus and dedication for competitions throughout the season to ensure your best performance?

Niko Wright: To prepare myself, I remember what I did in previous meets that ensured my success. Watching past videos of my personal records and best performances eases my nerves when going to meets where I am unsure if I can win. With more experience, I have developed a “meet-day routine” that prepares my body and mind to move as fast as possible.

Jack Cornish: I always break down my races into their simplest parts and focus on each stroke I will do when I first dive into my race. I always visualize each race and think about every aspect to ensure my stroke is as good as possible.



Will Weis, Niko Wright



Kyle McKenney



Daniel Ye



Niko Wright and Seamus Finn



Ben Ho

Q: What's the most exciting part of being a swim/diver or track team member?

Niko Wright: It's when all event groups are doing great at meets. It creates great team chemistry and gives everyone extra motivation to do well in their own events.

Kyle McKenney: The most exciting part is the ability to be yourself, which adds to an environment that fosters creativity unlike any other team or classroom environment.

Q: How do you push through moments of doubt or fatigue to achieve your goals?

Eric Engel: I put my head down and swim. Before the 400 Freestyle Relay at the end of the State Championships, I felt really fatigued from the entire meet. My teammates did a great job at helping me ignore the fatigue and pump me up.

Seamus Finn: I move on with what I can do. Whatever happens happens. I try to make it so that the next opportunity that I have to improve is taken with sufficient preparation.

Q: What's the hardest lesson you've learned through sports and how has it made you a better athlete?

Eric Engel: The hardest lesson I've learned is that success does not come easily and that hard work is not everything for success. You can work so hard and dedicate years to something, but if you are unable to execute when pressure comes around, you are never going to see success. I've been working on my performance under pressure for a while and I am now starting to see the results that I have worked for.

Seamus Finn: Patience is the most important aspect to have. What you want will not come to fruition within a few days or weeks.

Oliver Engel: I've learned that no matter how hard you try, you will never be the best. There is always going to be someone out there who is bigger, stronger and better. But you can't let that affect you. You just have to put your head down and swim your race.

Q: Share a memorable moment when teamwork was crucial during a competition.

Niko Wright: Our relay team was seeded second going into the State final. The school that was seeded first was Rochester's Hilton High School, and they were the big favorites to win it all. Our relay team - consisting of me, Ben Ho, Kyle McKenney and Seamus Finn - worked together by running our best and performing the best hand-offs possible (which had been a struggle in past meets). However, we ended up beating Hilton by 11 hundredths of a second to win the State title.

Kyle McKenney: It was competing against Hilton in the 4x200 Relay at States. Ben screaming at me to "Go!" made my adrenaline skyrocket and pass Hilton, which put us in first place. Then we had Seamus win us the State title after he ran two 300-meter races earlier in the day.

Q: What strategies do you use to support and motivate your teammates during challenging times?

Oliver Engel: At the beginning of a meet, we do a cheer that gets everyone really hyped up and ready to swim fast.

Seamus Finn: I tell them to look ahead, take what you can out of the bad moments and look toward the future.

Eric Engel: Most of the time, it is just about keeping the energy high. Swim meets are long and very fatiguing. When you can be loud and pump up your teammates, it makes everyone swim faster.

Q: Describe a friendship you've formed on the team. How has it impacted your experience in sports?

Oliver Engel: I have made good friendships with many of my teammates. We all see how hard we work and we respect each other. We have become close in the pool and it has made the team a lot more fun.

Seamus Finn: Almost all of my friendships have been formed - or our bonds strengthened - through track. It is a close-knit community where we support each other and work toward a common goal.



Jack Cornish, Oliver Engel, Erik Nadecki, LJ Gulotta, Jayden Holmes, Connor McHugh



Jayden Holmes



Oliver Engel

Jonas Balcetis

Q: What skills - mental or physical - have you improved upon the most since joining the team?

Eric Engel: I have definitely improved on my mental skills. Even just last year, my mentality for races was always horrible, leading me to never swim at my full potential. This year, I have made giant steps and I have seen the result of this.

Seamus Finn: Every skill that relates to track I believe I have improved upon. But, generally, it would be my dedication to track and trying to optimize what I can control.

Jack Cornish: Because swimming is such a big commitment, I have made huge strides in my time management skills and ability to make up work after missing school days.

Q: How do you balance the demands of academics with your commitment to sports?

Niko Wright: I balance the demands of academics with my commitment to sports by creating schedules for the afternoon, so I know what to do for that day. Even if the work is overwhelming, I can mentally and physically prepare myself for my future work.

Kyle McKenney: You have to prioritize. Obviously, being a student-athlete is the goal but sometimes it's unrealistic. You should always keep your mental health in check and make sure that with the continuous stress - from academic and athletic pressure - you're not going to fall apart.



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LJ Gulotta, Erik Nadecki, Connor McHugh, Jayden Holmes, Oliver Engel



Eric Engel

Q: Share a funny moment you experienced with your teammates that strengthened your bond.

Oliver Engel: We had a team dinner Friday night before finals at States. Everyone made something - mostly pasta - and it turns out we have pretty good cooks on the team. It was a great team-bonding experience and it fueled us well as we won States the next day by over 115 points.

Niko Wright: Whenever track pictures come out after the season ends, my teammates and I view them. Most of the time, a lot of the pictures are very silly looking. It always brings out laughter for me and my teammates.

Jack Cornish: The G-Swim cheer we usually do is funny because it is completely unrelated to swimming or Greeley but it is always very hype and gets us ready for the meet.

Q: What advice would you give incoming first-year students or new athletes looking to excel on the team?

Jack Cornish: Be persistent and focus on technique.

Kyle McKenney: Work hard and enjoy the pain.

Oliver Engel: If Greeley wants to keep the winning routine, they need to get in the pool and work.

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